

THE REFORMER.

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Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth. Jeremiah v. 1.

“*Freethinking Christians’ Quarterly Register.*”

We have lately met with the first number of a publication printed in London, under the above title, for January, 1823. This work is conducted by a Society of *Christians*, called the *Freethinking Christian Church*, “at present assembling in the metropolis, and in various parts of the country, for the purpose both of private improvement and of public teaching.” This church, as stated in the prospectus to the work, “had its origin in a small body of individuals, who, a few years since, impressed with the importance of *religion*, yet disgusted with the absurdities which generally disgrace its name, resolved to think for themselves—to take the Scriptures and *the Scriptures only* as the standard of Christianity; and who, equally regardless of that authority which has restrained inquiry, and of those consequences, which men affect to dread from it, determined to ‘*seek Truth wherever she might be found, and to follow her whithersoever she might lead them.*’

“If,” continues the prospectus, “they have trodden in unusual paths, the views which have opened to them are, perhaps, no less worthy of remark. At this time they exist as A CHRISTIAN BODY, *without priests*—for they have found the hireling teacher no where spoken of in the New Testament, except as an object of reprobation; *without forms and ceremonies*—for the religion of Jesus they have learned was wholly mental and spiritual in its nature; *closely compacted and united amongst themselves*—for the Christian church they find compared, by its first teachers, to the living human body; in these, and in other *fundamental and essential points*, differing from the various sects and parties claiming the name of Christian, their views and their opinions in religious matters have

now, after a considerable period of inquiry and investigation, become as different from those of others as their religious practices may be deemed singular and extraordinary."

The Society are in the practice, half-yearly, of mutually exchanging *Reports*. The following is an extract from one of the most recent of these Reports, addressed from the London to the country branches of the church, and will serve to give an idea of the practical views of Christianity entertained by the body:—

"It is not enough to profess our principles. It will be to our shame and to our misery *merely* to profess them. The false props of fanaticism itself are not more dangerous, or more fatal, than that 'strong delusion' which leads a man to repose upon correct theoretical principles, without their being implanted in his heart, and without his bringing forth their fruits in his conduct. Let us, my friends, endeavour by all means to gain those glorious ends. Putting off the 'old man,' with all the pursuits, and all the prejudices which mark the worldly character, let us, in the truly scripture sense, be 'born again' to virtue, principle, and knowledge. Let us not stop coldly to calculate how little of principle will suffice, or how much of worldly habits we can with safety retain; but remember that to our weak and imperfect nature there is no safety but in humility, in vigilance, in constancy, and in a persevering aim at even the highest degree of perfection. Let us not by a blind, hypocritical, and lying candour (or affectation of candour rather) give weak or bad men, should they introduce themselves amongst us, the advantage; thereby neutralizing the otherwise powerful efforts of the virtuous and strong minded; but let us (in love and benevolence indeed, but still in truth) speak of men and of principles as they deserve, and as we really think them. Let us rebuke those whom we think to blame, with sincerity—and bestow our approbation, where deserved, with cheerfulness; acting neither as men-pleasers, nor as seeking merely our own repose and quietness, but as answerable to our heavenly Father for the talents given to our care—and as servants who *know* the will of their Master, and are therefore tenfold more deserving of punishment, should they neglect its performance.

“In this spirit, friends, let us act, each, individually—with benevolence to others, for blessings have freely and bountifully been given to us—with prudence before the world, for the eyes of the evil are fixed upon us; intent to discover and to magnify our failings, in order to traduce our principles—with activity in the business and duties of life, for so we shall best shew ourselves the disciples of our beloved Master—with minds zealously affected towards the rights of the church of God, and devoted to the extending its benignant influence upon mankind—with faithfulness in giving, and humility in receiving reproof; not regarding him as an enemy who honestly, and in a Christian spirit, rebukes us, but, on the contrary, cherishing him as the best and most valuable of friends—with brotherly kindness towards each other, wherever it may be possible, promoting each other’s welfare; and, above all, with true piety and fervent, unaffected devotion, remembering the blessings which, above all others, we enjoy—encouraging the prayer of the heart and the closet—drawing from the scriptures the principles which should actuate the Christian’s conduct—striving to imitate the great excellencies of our Master Jesus, and his apostles—dwelling on the character and the attributes of that infinite and all-powerful Being who formed us by his will, and who supports us by his providence—cherishing within us the pure, but subtile flame of gratitude and thankfulness—and duly preparing ourselves for that hour of death, and that day of judgment which is, to all human beings, the close of their earthly pursuits, and which opens to the Christian the hopes of eternal happiness in a state of things, where the wicked shall cease from troubling, and where each shall be judged according to his works done in the flesh, whether they have been good, or whether they have been evil.”

Extract from a REVIEW OF THE RELIGIOUS WORLD, in the London “FREETHINKING CHRISTIAN’S QUARTERLY REGISTER,” for January, 1823.

“Such things! such men before thee! such an age!”—*Churchill.*

In these days of outward profession and popular sanctity, when men are encompassing sea and land to make

proselytes, we trust that our readers will deem it neither an unnecessary nor unimportant task to *register* and *review* the passing events of the RELIGIOUS WORLD.

Designed as a medium through which to record the progress of religious principles, the proceedings of religious bodies, or the character and conduct of individuals holding important stations in the religious world, it is anticipated that this department of the Work may be found interesting to the Public; whilst the reflections of the rational, the *Freethinking* Christian, on the matters passing in review, will, it is presumed, be of a nature conducive to the interests of religion and truth, and injurious only to those who are hostile to their progress, or who are seeking to render them the instruments of their own ambition, or the means of their own aggrandizement.

The *religious world* may be divided into two great classes, the one professing or believing the Christian revelation; the other unacquainted with that revelation, or denying its authenticity. The latter—Pagan superstition or popular infidelity—may sometimes, perhaps, attract our pen, but our account will chiefly be with the former—the *professing world*, as it is technically termed. We shall not, indeed, concern ourselves with the disputes and the differences that have divided the various sects of Christians, so called, but shall remark chiefly on the features and characteristics which are common to all: protestantism being, in our estimation, but a rank spirit drawn from the bitter lees of papacy; and the more enlightened sects of protestant dissenters but the more sublimated vapours of the same obnoxious spirit!

At no period of history has the state of religion presented matter for more extensive reflection and inquiry than the present; whilst the general features which it exhibits, are strikingly characteristic and peculiar to the times in which we live. The various interests that are engaged, and the amazing efforts that are made in the maintenance and dissemination of the system, passing under the name of Christianity, would, to the partial observer, mark the present as a truly RELIGIOUS AGE. *In the cause of religion*, the public councils of our own state, and of the other great European powers are, at the present time, actively engaged. *In the cause of religion*, the

holy alliance and the army of the faith are trying the arts of diplomacy and of war. *In the cause of religion*, our missionaries are tempting the perils of unknown seas, and enduring the extremes of tropical heat and of polar cold. *In the cause of religion*, the scriptures are translated into every living language; and cargoes of bibles, and freights of divinity are exported to every part of the habitable globe. *In the cause of religion*, the arm of the law is constantly uplift, and the tender mercies of crown lawyers and Christian judges are daily exercised in restoring the backslider, and convincing the gainsayer. These, with our National Schools, and Sunday Schools, our Tract Societies, and Home Missionary Societies, our Societies for the Conversion of Soldiers and Sailors, Watermen and Lightermen, Hackney-coachmen and Convicts, convey, in some imperfect degree, the extent and variety of the operations carried on in the cause of religion.* Religion, indeed, meets us at every corner, accosts us at every turning, and surrounds us in every situation.† The temples which the piety of our fathers had raised, are insufficient for the purposes of modern devotion—*New Churches* attract the eye in every division of the Metropolis—*Tent Meetings* arrest the attention of the Sunday pedestrian, and *Floating Chapels* invite the curiosity of the aquatic party: the mechanical arts become subservient to the objects of Christian conversion, and religion is

* See Report of 'Bethel Seaman's Union,' 'Port of London Society,' 'Watermen, Lightermen, and Bargemen's Friend Society and Bethel Union.' For the efforts in favour of Hackney Coachmen and others, see the Report of the last anniversary meeting of the Orange Street Tract Society.

† Some idea of the extent of the exertions made by the Religious Public, may be formed from the fact that the British and Foreign Bible Society, had up to the date of their last Report, collected in money £ 1,800,526, [8,002,337 dollars] and distributed in Bibles and Testaments 3,563,974 copies; besides which

The disbursements of the Church Missionary Society, for the year 1821, were		£ 32,896
The London Missionary Society	- - - - -	40,000
The Baptist Missionary Society	- - - - -	10,600
The Wesleyan Missionary Society	- - - - -	30,925
The London Association has paid in aid of the Mission of the United Brethren		1,896

Making a total of upwards of one hundred and sixteen thousand pounds, [515,555 dollars] expended last last year by the above five Missionary Societies.—This war against Satan is certainly an expensive one; we should be curious to learn the charge of the *commissariat*!

worked by steam! Religious excursions to Gravesend or the Nore are daily advertised; the steam boats hold out the attraction of being manned by captains, sailors, and cabin-boys, who fear the Lord. Prayers occupy the time usually spent by similar parties in polite intercourse, and sermons take the place of sea-sickness!

Do we, because religion has become so fashionable a thing, felicitate ourselves on being born in a Christian country? Do we boast with others the triumphs of the Cross? Do we, as friends to Christianity, derive consolation from the contemplation of such a state of things as we have just described? No! on the contrary, we behold, with shame and mortification, the mockery that is hereby made of the Christian religion—the invitation that is held out to question its truth and doubt its authenticity; and, however general may be the profession, however vehement the display of religious belief, we are impressed with the painful conviction that the religion of Jesus was never less known, or less practised, than at the present moment. Outward protestation and inward indifference—pretended zeal, but real selfishness—assumed piety and actual worldly-mindedness, are the characteristics of the age. HYPOCRISY is the pregnant evil—the giant vice of our times!! This is not the language of vague declamation, or of dogmatical prejudice; our condemnation of the spirit and principles which actuate the present age, is a necessary consequence, not of our belief in this or that particular doctrine, or opinion, but our belief in CHRISTIANITY. Men may, perhaps, honestly differ about some of the *doctrines* of Christianity, but its GENIUS, its PRINCIPLES, its OBJECTS are, we apprehend, so clearly portrayed in the New Testament, as, with regard to them, to preclude any conscientious variety of opinion. Can any man, or any set of men, affect to doubt that virtue and morality—that sincerity and integrity—that disinterestedness and honesty—that meekness and humility—that union and equality—that forbearance and love—that inward faith and unobtrusive, unpretending devotion are of the very essence of the gospel? And are *these* the qualities which distinguish the Christian profession in the present age? What! when religion is avowedly upheld by the sword—when kings, despotic in their characters, and immoral in their lives, assume, as of right, the

Christian name—when priests are the open or insidious traitors to the rights and liberties of mankind—when the truths of the gospel are doled out for hire, and godliness converted into gain—when the corrupt, the selfish, and the proud, are among the foremost in all public religious proceedings—when, with Christian professors, titles, and rank, and dominion, become the privileges of the few, and ignorance and servility the lot of the many—when devotion and piety are obtruded on the public gaze, whilst their very semblance is wanting in the private intercourse and duties of life, will it be pretended that the religion of Jesus prevails—that the kingdom of God is established upon the earth?

There are, no doubt, among the leaders of all parties, men of respectable characters and attainments; and among their respective followers, also, many decent, inoffensive sort of people, with sense sufficient to take care of their own interests, and who, in the private walks of life, preserve the even tenor of their ways, without offending against the laws of the land, or transgressing the commands of the decalogue. But we have been accustomed to contemplate Christianity as a system designed to separate men from the world—to purify them from its corruptions—to raise them above its false interests—and to fix their hopes beyond the grave; for which state the whole discipline of the gospel was designed to prepare them. Let those who are courting the favour of men; whose objects are answered *here*; who, in the present life, have their reward—let them give up the hopes of an *hereafter*—let them renounce the name of CHRISTIAN and our opposition to them is at an end; it is as *Christians* we arraign them—it is as *Christians* we try them—it is the assumption of that honoured name that constitutes the *gravamen* of our charge against them.

But convinced, as we are, that true religion can never prevail until this specious, showy, popular system of outward faith, which blinds men's eyes and satisfies their consciences, is brought into disrepute, it will be our object, in these papers, to detect and to expose the religious hypocrisy of the times—to examine and to analyze the mass of folly and delusion which passes current for Christianity—to bring to light the vile arts which are practised on public credulity—and to trace conduct and principles.

to their just motives and consistent objects. In the execution of the task we have thus imposed upon ourselves, if our language should be strong, and our reprobation decided, let it not be supposed that we are actuated either by personal feeling or party spirit—we have no selfish objects—"we have no resentment;" but, convinced that an inveterate disease, which preys on the vitals and tugs at the life-strings of the system, is not to be removed by opiates, we venture to apply the most active remedies that our *materia medica* can furnish.

The subjects which will come under observation in these papers will, necessarily, be so various that we have not been enabled to fix upon any plan of arrangement. Our observation, and that, indeed, of the public, has, of late, been chiefly directed to the CHARACTER AND CRIMES OF THE CLERGY; and to this subject, specifically, we purpose devoting the remainder of this paper, conceiving that its present importance will justify us in leaving for a future occasion any more general examination and notice of the religious world. It is our intention, also, to confine our strictures to the regular, the established clergy of this and other of the states of Christendom. These stand first in importance: these, from their alliance to worldly power, have the greater means of mischief. We have no attachment, certainly, to priests of any denomination, but, an established priesthood is an incumbrance to which all are alike compelled to become contributory.

Turning our attention first then to the south of Europe, the Peninsula may be regarded as the head quarters of priestcraft—as the hot-bed and forcing-frame of fanaticism and superstition.

SPAIN, at the present moment, engages the observation of every friend to humanity; and the ecclesiastics are notoriously the instigators or instruments of those calamities of which that illfated country is now the unhappy scene.

"Spain" (to use the terms of the report recently addressed by the Spanish Secretary of War to the Cortes) "was advancing majestically in the career of liberty, and was affording a proof, in the tranquility and content of her inhabitants, of the possibility, in this enlightened age, of passing, without convulsion, from a state of ignorance

and despotism to one of knowledge and rational liberty. The Cortes were assembled; abuses were reformed; new institutions were established with so much order and harmony, that Spain was, under this new aspect, the admiration of the universe. Some nations wished to imitate her example; and, in short, the political code of Spain served as a model, and was adopted by several European nations."

The character and conduct of the clergy, by whose machinations the fair prospects of the Spanish nation have been thus cruelly marred, are sufficiently conspicuous. All the accounts from Spain agree in representing them as the fomentors of disorder—the demons of discord and of strife. Merino and many others of the insurgent chiefs are, in fact, priests. O'Donnel, the general in chief of *the army of the faith*, in Navarre, avows, in a recent address, that religion and the *worldly* interests of religion are the objects for which he fights.

"The Regency" (says he) "commands me to put myself at your head; to direct your tried valour and your efforts towards *the sole end* of all good and loyal Spaniards, which is to replace the religion of our fathers, now debased and outraged, in all the *splendour* which it once possessed in the midst of a nation so justly celebrated by its catholicism."

The spirit of this religion, which is now to be maintained by the swords of traitors and the devices of priests, is admirably illustrated by reference to one of the "*secret instructions*" given by Eguia, to General Quesada, on his taking command of the army of *the faith*, which instructions are said to have been found among the papers of Quesada, when defeated at Bolea.—Art. 7. "*You will not give quarter to any prisoner taken on the field of battle, even though the enemy should treat theirs with the greatest forbearance possible!!*"

[We are unable to extend our extracts for want of room; the article is of considerable length, which with others make ninety-six octavo pages for the *January* number of the *Register*.]

For the Reformer.

In contrasting the pomp and pride of the Clergy of this day, with the conduct of our Saviour, it would seem as though he was not at all to be held up as a model for imi-

tation. The reason of it is plain and obvious. His object was not pecuniary or temporal advantages; nor was it intended by him, that the dissemination of his Gospel should ever after be connected with worldly views of any kind. And hence as *his kingdom was not of this world*, the number belonging to it has ever been small.

The delusion and blindness of the highest orders of mankind, with respect to the gospel, from their being placed in a condition not to receive and embrace it with the simplicity required, go to prove its Divine origin in a most conspicuous manner. The lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life, so absorb their attention and command their regard, that they are incapable of understanding the nature of that religion, taught by Him who *sought not his own glory*, and who was *meek and lowly in heart*. And thus while professing the Christian name, they have erected those corrupt and wicked superstructures, that serve the purposes of fraud, injustice, pride, revenge, war, &c.

We may date the corruption and decline of the Christian religion, more particularly, from the days of Constantine, when he stretched forth the arm of temporal power for its support. Every section of Europe, calling itself Christian, has, in every succeeding age since, made it an engine of state power, and perverted its name to the purposes of delusion, violence and war. Many of the wars undertaken by one Christian nation against another, have arisen out of religion, and were designed for its maintenance. At this very day a nation, for a long time borne down by religious intolerance and priestcraft, after having broken its shackles and being engaged in salutary reforms, is complained of by the greatest part of Europe for an invasion of Church patrimony and rights, which had at first been secured and established by fraud and violence.*

Antichrist is so clearly and distinctly marked, that its existence can no longer be doubted, where we see the pre-

* The great hypocrite of Europe, at the head of Bible and religious societies, has been hailed as the great harbinger of peace on earth and good will to men, for preparing a military league, called "The Holy Alliance," said to be founded on the Holy Scriptures, to keep down insurrections, and for waging no wars but such as are justified by them to preserve the peace of Europe.

tenders of religion disposed to violence towards their fellow men. Pure and undefiled religion allows of no worldly sanctions or motives to mix their influence with it. The chief part of mankind are generally disposed to participate in the spirit which actuates their rulers, and to make their religion subservient to the purposes of their gain and glory.

There cannot be a greater evidence of hypocrisy in religion, than to see those who make such a pretence and show about it, ready to draw the sword for its defence and support, as was the case with the scribes and pharisees; who, while they were the strictest observers of the ceremonies and rites of the Church, like the clergy of this day, were plotting the destruction of the Saviour of the world.

Compare the character and conduct of the clergy of the present times with the scribes and pharisees. Do they not lay heavy burdens on mens' shoulders in order to live in ease and splendour? Do they not love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and to be called Reverend and Dr.? Do they not for a pretence make long prayers? compass sea and land to make one proselyte, while their arm is not extended to relieve their suffering fellow mortals who surround them?

For the clergy of this day to plead an exemption from these charges, is but an arrogant assumption. By their fruits they are known, and by the Scriptures they are condemned. Amidst their zeal for the conversion of the heathen, they betray their love of the world and their devotion to idolatry. It is not the name that makes a man a Christian; nor the country we live in which exempts us from idolatrous practices. From the earliest ages of the world, a propensity to idolatry has predominated among men, and it was never more manifest than it is now in Christian countries. There is as great an exhibition of it in a Christian land, where all the modes and forms of worship are prepared and arranged to gratify and delight an audience for the sake of gain, as in a land of pagan darkness. The monuments of it are every where erecting throughout our country, as though God could not be sought but through Theological Seminaries, nor worshipped but in expensive idolatrous temples, called churches and meeting houses, profanely consecrated to

Christ, the Trinity, St. Paul, St. Peter, St. James, St. Augustine, St. Mary, &c. &c.

Contrast the long, formal, and ostentatious prayers of our clergy, as though God was to be delighted or rather mocked with a well chosen set of words, with the short and comprehensive prayer of our Lord, which was given for a form to all true believers, and see what analogy exists between them? The things wanted are known before asked for, and hence a short and humble petition, made in any place or manner, is all that is required.

When religion is made a matter of bargain and sale, there is evidently a departure from its simplicity and intentions; the ability to minister being the gift of God, cannot be obtained or bought with money. No one is so far governed by blind infatuation or obstinacy, as to deny this assertion; yet in practice it is denied, for the condition is, that if money is not given, preaching cannot be had. The practical declaration indeed is now so generally prevalent, that this gift is to be bought, that the question is very readily put, Can a man devote his time and attention to preaching without being paid for it? or, in other words, can a man serve an apprenticeship to this trade for nothing? It is thus implied, that a divine commission can be acquired by every one that sets out for it for the sake of money and distinction. The church of Christ admits of no proud distinctions among its members; but the impression has grown familiar, that the clerical robe and power are to be revered, and that those who possess them are entitled to great favours and emoluments among men. From whence is the power to preach, as now practised, derived, but from men who can pretend to no divine commission to give it; and to whom is it given but to men who can pretend to no divine influence, and are apparently governed by carnal and worldly views? Since the advent of our Saviour, when all types, shadows, and ceremonies were to be done away, and God was to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, the establishment of an order of priesthood is not necessary for the prevalence and propagation of the Gospel: unless it is pretended, that God is better pleased with pomp and show, than with the devotion of the heart. Wherever a few are gathered together in unity and love, and with the belief and feelings of Christians, they can preach and expound the Scriptures as far as necessary, devoid of ostentation.

Denying, as we do, to this set of men any greater power or ability to preach the Gospel than is enjoyed by the humblest individual, we are at issue as to the exercise of any right or power about it by any one above another, except what is produced from the mere impulse of Christian duty, and a willingness to do it freely and for nothing.

When we can be made to believe, that Imams, Muftis, Popes and Cardinals, Monks and Nuns, Bishops and Archbishops exalted to princely dignities and riches, and Presbyteries and Synods exercising religious sway and lording it over our land, are conforming to the simplicity and injunctions of the Gospel, then we will say, that to build pagodas, lofty minarets, St. Peters' and St. Pauls' churches, monasteries and convents, numerous theological seminaries and splendid meeting houses, is to worship God in spirit and in truth; and that pomp and pride, riches, honours and greatness, constitute the religion of Jesus Christ.

A VIRGINIAN.

For the Reformer.

[Communicated from New-York.]

To the Editors.—Having been a constant reader of the Reformer, I have observed with much satisfaction, that it has pursued a steady course, marked out, no doubt, by the precepts of righteousness, regardless of the favours or frowns of men. You must, however, expect that the contents of your publication will be met by a certain class of men, as the truth was met by the Scribes and Pharisees of old; giving evidence, that although they have departed, they have left their mantle behind, and that their successors possess the same envious persecuting spirit. To such men the voice of truth will always cut like a two-edged sword: it taketh peace from their earth, and they cannot endure it. Hence war with them is inevitable—and it will continue so long as the voice of the true heir is heard among them; for they will not feel secure, but will be saying, let us kill or silence this voice also, and the inheritance shall be ours.

While it is admitted, that there are good, sincere-hearted individuals in every religious society, it is nevertheless the duty of a Reformer, to expose the corruptions of all, in order to effect a sound reformation. To point

out the various transformations of the man of sin, and son of perdition, from his first appearance in sheep's clothing, until he succeeds in exalting himself above all that is called God, or is worshipped, is no small task. It is his grand policy so to disguise himself, as not to be known or suspected; while his constant aim is to get the ascendancy, and rule according to his will. And if the sheep, or true members of Christ's church, refuse to submit to his authority, their only resource is to take to the wilderness, which they have oftentimes been compelled to do—being more secure among the children of nature, than among those whom Satan hath deluded to suppose they are the children of grace.

I have no particular dislike to wolves, or any other natural animals, provided they occupy the place assigned them by Providence: but a wolf in a sheep's-skin, or for wolves to undertake to govern the church of Christ, excites my utter abhorrence. Their very nature is to rend and devour, and these cruel animals are more or less numerous in every degenerate and fallen religious community. They always set themselves above the sheep, and whoever resists their pretensions, or witnesses against their practices, will experience the whole force of their strength and their vengeance. These imitative impostors, although destitute of every principle of virtue, from motives of interest and policy, endeavour to maintain a conspicuous standing in some religious society; and they act their part so judiciously within the redoubts of discipline, that it is difficult to get any hold of them, notwithstanding they commit depredations both within and without the society, exhibiting evident marks of the claws of the wolf. Should they even be arraigned or brought to an account for their fierceness and cruelty, they will put up an innocent look, and contend they could not have scratched so hard; or if they have, it was not intentional; and this is considered Christian satisfaction, by the wolves in authority; and here the matter ends, or at least is all the satisfaction the sufferer is able to obtain, while the wolf is preparing himself for another attack. In the mean time, all are enjoined to live in love and unity, as becometh brethren; forgetting or not considering, that in the nature of things, wolves and sheep can never agree.

The Apostle appears to have had a sight of these things, when he foretold that *grievous wolves* should enter into the church, not sparing the flock. Christ also represents such false professors to be wolves in sheep's clothing. Now a wolf being by nature neither as harmless as a dove, nor yet as wise as a serpent, it is evident, when he adopts the sheep-skin policy, he is under the direction of the serpent; for should he appear only as a wolf, he would stand exposed among the sheep, and could do them less harm: but when he puts on the clothing of a sheep, and is under the direction of serpentine wisdom, it requires the aid of the light of divine truth to follow him in all his various windings and disguised shapes. One of the most obvious, however, I will here mention as a sample for the rest: If he is a monopolizer, a forestaller of the market by annual contracts, and injures not only all in his own line of business, but the community, by enhancing the price of articles of the first necessity beyond their intrinsic value, the Godly pretence is, to do as he would wish to be done by, in giving the seller a just equivalent for his property. But if he is defeated in his plans, by not being able to keep up the price of the article, he gets disengaged from his contracts by another Godly pretence—that he in honesty is bound to inform his creditors, that if he is held to his engagements, he will not be able to pay them. The artifice succeeds. Such honest integrity is thought worthy of a reward, (although abundantly able to pay) and high and lofty praises are sung to the glorious excellency of this sheep-skin religion; while the honest fair dealer is left to contend with the difficulties which such unrighteous hypocrisy has occasioned, and the blood-sucker is liberated to commit new depredations, and to prey upon the vitals of the community.

If the *Reformer*, occasionally by some pointed remarks, should follow up these wolves in their various hiding places, and expose them to open view, it would subserve the interests of pure Christianity, and promote the welfare and happiness of mankind.* Moreover, find-

* *Note by the Editors.*—The practice to which our correspondent alludes, deserves the severest rebuke; and if he or others, will, from time to time, furnish the names of such as fully answer to the above description among professors of religion, we will keep a list

ing there were those that had an eye upon them, it might have a tendency to reform such of them as are not beyond the reach of hope, by convincing them that it is more trouble to conceal their character, than it would be to become really what they ought to be. It might also deter many in their operations; while others might think it most prudent to take to the woods, the proper place for such animals; which could not fail to be a great relief as well as matter of rejoicing to many, and would no doubt meet the approbation of every sincere upright Christian, in every religious society. Then, indeed, the sheep of the Lord's pasture might feed and lie down in safety, as at noonday, and many that are now kept at a distance by these wolves, might be brought, or would of themselves come into the true sheepfold, under the one Shepherd; even all such as Zaccheus the publican, and him of whom Christ testified, *I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.* Thus true faith and righteousness would increase, and hypocrisy and false religion decrease. The imposing nature of being united to some religious sect, has already lost much of its force. Mankind are beginning to see that it is of little consequence to what society individuals may belong, or what name they take on themselves, since the Lord's requirement to man is, "to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly;" and that agreeably to the Apostle's testimony, "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of men."

FREELY.

For the Reformer.

Messrs. Editors,—I perceive by the papers, that Mr. Frey, the converted Jew, so called, is wandering to the South, draining money from the people, in order to establish a new Canaan for his Jewish brethren, in the state of New York, whither they are to be brought from Germany, and all parts of Europe. I perceive, also, that Mr. Frey

in our pages, and bring them before the public as a terror to such evil-doers. This seems the only way to reach the consciences of these characters, and give a check to their proceedings. It may be proper, however, to state, that the best authority in such cases will always be necessary.

has been sharply assailed in some of our public prints—nor do I at all wonder at this, from the schemes and intrigues he has adopted to carry his plans into effect. I shall here take a view of some of his statements, in a sermon preached at New-Castle, (Del.) not long since; when we shall the better be able to judge of his character, and his endeavours to mislead the public mind, with a view to excite its sympathy to contribute to this new project of the day.

According to my best recollection, Mr. Frey stated, that when a Jew was converted to the Christian faith, in England, there was not a Christian that would receive him, or grant him any favours or assistance. Now, every rational mind will at once perceive the absurdity of this statement; for whether a man has been a Jew, a Turk, or a heathen, if he be soundly converted to God, every real Christian, who has the temper and spirit of his religion, will embrace him as a brother, and give him the right-hand of fellowship. The only reason why those proselyted from Judaism are not better received, is because there are so many rogues and villains among the Jews, that have pretended to believe in the Christian faith, that prudence and caution with respect to them are deemed highly necessary. Being brought into a profession of Christianity, for the most part, by the instrumentality of our corrupt priests, they are just on a par with those Gentiles brought into the pale of the Jewish church, in our Saviour's time, by the Scribes and Pharisees. The only title to Christianity, which too many of them possess, is that of being sprinkled with a little elementary water, and partaking of the bread and wine; after which, instances, it seems, have occurred, where they have levied contributions upon silver spoons, &c.; and in one case, where the convert had been appointed to the office of clerk, he turned about and robbed the church of the communion plate, and the surplices for the Priest. I will here make a quotation or two from the *British Critic*, in relation to this subject:—

“The *Rev. Mr. Way*, [employed by the London Society for converting the Jews] has we understand, found to his cost, that a converted Jew gains no very clear ideas of Christian honesty from the process; having not only detected these hopeful children of grace and the new light, in levying contributions upon his silver spoons,

and such light articles ; but having been robbed of the communion plate, and surplices of his church, by the convert who, with admirable propriety, had been appointed to the office of clerk ; and having reason to suspect the same person of forgery upon his banker to the amount of some hundred pounds."

In speaking of the *Report of the London Society*, and of its account of some conversions among the Jews, the same publication remarks :—

"But it does not tell the public and the subscribers, how much these several and all similar conversions have cost the Society ;* how much the half-naked and hungry Jew has been tempted by food and clothes, to profess a faith of which he knew or cared no more than of the Koran ; how two, three, or four pounds a week have been lavished upon pretended converts, who before could not earn as many shillings ; and how many instances of such ill-judged attempts to bribe the souls of the ignorant and avaricious, have been deservedly repaid by ingratitude, abuse and desertion. The following anecdote, which, as far as we have been able to learn, remains to this day uncontradicted, affords, we fear, a fair specimen upon which these Jewish conversions have been effected.—A man of the name of Marinus, came from Germany into this country, for the purpose of obtaining sale for some Cologne water, of which he professed to be the inventor. Finding himself run short of cash, he applied to the London Society for assistance. I asked him (says Mr. Gookman) if he had embraced Christianity : his reply was, I am not yet converted, but if I can get a good sale for my Cologne water, I soon shall be.—A volume [continues the *British Critic*,] might be filled with similar instances of fraud on the one hand, and credulity on the other."

Whether Mr. Frey is one of these sort of converts or not, I pretend not to say ; but in his sermon he stated, that without money he could do nothing. How unlike the Apostles are all such modern priests. The Apostle Paul said : "Christ strengthening me, I can do all things;" and he wanted not the assistance of money to spread the Gospel ; but the preachers of this day tell us nothing can be done without money ; and, like a lawyer, they will not open their mouths without a fee, and that of no ordinary kind.

Again ; Mr. Frey stated that there was not a Jew boy in England, that could get a place to learn a mechanical

* It appears that the "London Society for Promoting Christianity amongst the Jews," had expended during the first ten years after its institution, about 95,000 pounds, or 422,222 dollars ; at which time, says the *British Critic*, "the Society does not boast much of its success in making converts;" and observes, that the Jewish converts of the Society, "might probably be accommodated within a single pew in any church."

branch of business. Now I have it from good authority, and from men of the first standing in society, who have lived in London, that Monmouth street, in London, is larger than any three or four streets in New-Castle, and is full of Jew mechanics of all descriptions; taylors, silversmiths, jewellers, &c. &c. and a number of other streets not requisite to mention. And can no Jew boy get a place to learn a trade? The statement appears without any semblance of truth; but whether it was made through blinded zeal, or to induce the audience to give more liberally, I leave the public to decide.

No sooner was the sermon finished, than Mr. Frey was in the midst of the congregation, trying to establish a cent, fip, or eleven-penny-bit society, exclusive of \$30 collected that evening, and \$60 more in the morning and afternoon of the same day, at Wilmington. It was said, that some of the people were almost forced to become members to this society; but after considering and weighing the matter, they began to see the fraud and credulity which attend such schemes, and went the next morning and got their names expunged from the paper.

Mr. Frey, it seems, threatens to prosecute such editors of papers as take the liberty of expressing an opinion unfavourable to his character and proceedings; but the better way would be to endeavour so to conduct himself as not to merit their reproof and censure. I will now take leave of Mr. Frey, and conclude with another extract from the British Critic, on the subject of societies and combinations for the conversion of the Jews.

“In the present day, marked as it is by a continual craving after new projects, and an ill-regulated benevolence, which is always travelling out of the common road of duty, and seeking for its objects any where but at home, in its own church and among its own people, it would perhaps have been surprising if the case of the Jews had not recommended itself to the morbid sensibilities of restless enthusiasts; and still more so, if when new societies for religious speculations are as common, and often as delusive, as new joint stock companies in trade, the conversion of the Jews had not been made the pretext, or the object of a combination, where money might be collected, and the pomp of petty legislation indulged; where the praise of eloquence might be acquired at a cheap rate by would-be orators, and employment found for those who mistake activity for usefulness, and a zeal in making proselytes for religion.”

A GENTILE.

APPENDIX.

As an appendix to the foregoing communication, respecting Mr. Frey, we will here present the reader with an account of one of Mr. Frey's converts, published some time since in the *Hartford Connecticut Courant*, and afterwards copied into the *Boston Recorder*! It furnishes indeed a new and singular project for obtaining money from the people, under the sanction of religion. The writer signs himself "AN AMATEUR," and proceeds as follows:—

"*Mr. Editor*,—I was one of those whose curiosity was excited, on learning that Mr. Myers, a Prussian Jew, converted to the Christian faith by the celebrated Mr. Frey, was to exhibit his wonderful powers last evening at the Conference Room: I accordingly attended, and notwithstanding my expectations had been raised by the accounts of some gentlemen who had heard Mr. Myers in New-York and New-Haven, yet I was completely astonished to hear the strong, clear swell of a clarinet, accompanied with the utmost sweetness, and rapidity of movement. The notes were alternately raised to a pitch that required a room of the largest dimensions, and sunk to the soft warblings of the bulfinch. It was with difficulty I could realize, that the sounds proceeded from the human being before me. The sensations created by this novel exhibition, were mingled with the interesting reflection, that the person for whose benefit we were called to contribute, was one of the descendents of Abraham, the friend of God; of one who, in the face of his nation, after having for twenty years been a reader in their synagogues, had boldly come out, and professed his faith in Jesus, as the Messiah promised to their fathers. Such a scene does not occur every day, and calls forth the tenderest sensibilities of the Christian heart. Was there one present who did not wish Mr. Myers God-speed? Was there one who did not unite in the excellent and appropriate prayer of the Rev. Mr. Hawes? I hope, Sir, that when Mr. Myers visits this city again, there will be public notice given, that all may have an opportunity of attending; and that the exhibition may be in one of our places of worship, as it will be more favourable to the hearers, and the collection designed to defray the expenses of this gentleman's education, in the language of our country, may bear some proportion to the importance of the object, and the well known liberality of the Christians of Hartford."

From a statement in a late number of the *Boston Recorder*, it appears that Mr. Frey collected in Charleston, South Carolina, \$737 47 cents, and has proceeded to Savannah, by the way of Beaufort. Thus he scours the country.

A female Auxiliary Jews Society has been formed in Charleston, under the title of the "*Charleston Ladies Society*."

Conversion of the Jews and new Holy Alliance.

It appears from a late communication in the *Boston Recorder*, that the Roman Catholics in France are interesting themselves for accomplishing the conversion of the Jews. A correspondence has

been entered into between the *London Society* for promoting Christianity among the Jews, and some Roman Catholics at Paris, and the latter are about to commence a monthly publication for the furtherance of that object. In their reply to a letter addressed to them by the London Society, they observe: 'We are all Roman Catholics; but we must say, to do homage to truth, 'that your zeal hath provoked very many.' 2 Cor. ix. 2." The publication to be issued has for its second title, "*The Messenger of the Holy Alliance*," and they speak of Christians of "every communion, having one common interest," and that "they ought all to form a *Holy Alliance*, to defend the sacred banner of faith." Again they say to the Protestant worthies at London: "in spite of our outward differences, the hand of God is evidently at work to bring us together, and to unite us in spirit and in truth."

So matters go in this singular age—and those who for centuries have been setting forth the Catholic community as *Antichrist, Man of Sin, Son of perdition, Mystery Babylon, Mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth*, are now to come together heart and hand, and form one Holy Alliance to carry on the work of the Lord, and "to defend the sacred banner of faith."

[From the *Bedford (Pennsylvania) Gazette*.]

[The following is an extract from a letter written by an acquaintance of ours to his friend in Pittsburg, of the truth of which we have not the least doubt. Indeed, at the time the missionary family alluded to in the letter passed through Bedford, we suspected pretty strongly that their motive, in abandoning civilized society, was more with a view of bettering their own situation than that of the poor Indians.—*Ed. Gaz.*]

"BOONSVILLE, (Missouri,) Nov. 20th, 1822.

"As I was, in my last, so prolix in my observations on the country, I shall not trouble you with any further particulars concerning it at present—but cannot conclude my letter without offering some remarks on the Missionary Societies who reside in our vicinity, and whom you will recollect seeing in Pittsburg on their way to their present stations.

"They called forth a great deal of sympathy, and received liberal donations from the public in every place they passed through, on their way out, until they arrived in the western country; they consequently, came here very full-handed. Their reception here was something different from what they experienced in Pennsylvania, as I believe we can (from possessing better opportunities) more correctly enter into the merits of their object.

"Any attempts at civilizing the Indians, in this country, must ever prove futile and unavailing—Possessing an unlimited range of country, which abounds with buffaloes and every species of game which they can procure with ease, and free from the possibility of being encroached upon by the whites, their habits of life will lead them always to condemn the restraints of civilized society; to pre-

fer their native liberty and insulated independency to any regularly organized system of civil policy which can be substituted. It is only when game becomes scarce—when they become too much crowded to subsist by the simple arts of savage life, that Indians become fit subjects for intellectual improvement. To become convinced of these facts any one need be among the Indians here but a short time.

“It is thought here that the Missionaries (at least some of them) are actuated by a mixed motive in their present undertaking, and their conduct indeed (as I learn it I believe from good authorities) gives but too much room for such a surmise.—It is known here that they are possessed of abundance of all the necessities and even elegancies of life.—They have all the superfluities of dress common to fashionable society—the best broad cloths, &c. more than sufficient to last them their lives, and the probability is, that they have large cash funds.—That so far from experiencing hardships, or being a theme for our sympathies to dwell upon, they are rather the subjects of our envy.—They have, in their members, society enough for the solace of life, and keep workmen constantly employed making improvements for its conveniency and comfort—so that their situation is more desirable than that of nine-tenths of the people of Missouri;—yet, notwithstanding their comparative affluence, they *spunge* wherever they go, and I am told, expect to be franked at every house they call at, when in the settlement.—They have attempted to make collections in Franklin, of a people much poorer than themselves, but, I believe, have obtained nothing.—If what I have heard of them be true, I think that a generous and humane public, who gave so freely to them, have been somewhat imposed upon—but however this may be, there are a thousand channels in which charitable bounties might flow, in the present depressed state of human affairs, that would be a more fertile source of good to the human family.”

Extract of a letter from Geauga county, Ohio, dated March 14, 1823.

“You will recollect that I wrote you some time since respecting a Mission from the vicinity of Pittsburg to Fort Meigs, on the Maumee River. The two leaders of the expedition, after landing their families, underlings and booty, at the place appointed, immediately returned, and have ever since been industriously scraping together fresh plunder in the Northern parts of this state, especially the Western Reserve, where I reside.—This ‘Mission Family,’ as it is called, amount to thirty-one in number. I was at Fort Meigs last April, in company with several gentlemen—we were there a considerable time, and traversed nearly every part of the county; and while there we saw two Indian men, two women, and one papoose, and no more. I verily believe there are not fifteen natives in all, located in the county—so that while these heralds of the cross are fattening at Fort Meigs, they will do but little mischief.”

State of Missionary Funds and a call for money, copied from the Philadelphia Presbyterian "Christian Advocate," for April, 1823.

"We are exceedingly sorry to learn that the funds of *The United Foreign Missionary Society* are in such an exhausted state, as not only to forbid the attempt to establish another mission, to which the society is strongly invited by circumstances of a most favourable kind, but really to put at hazard the continuance of the missions already established—at least in a state of comfort for the missionaries employed, and with that support and assistance which they require to warrant the hope of success. This society has been formed by the union of three ecclesiastical bodies, which represent a considerable proportion of all the Christian churches in the United States. Will the churches not support and bear out this society? If they do not—Let every reader draw the consequences for himself—we will not depict them—it is painful only to imagine them. We hope they will not be realized. But if they are not, there must be a speedy and vigorous exertion. Mr. CHARLES HYDE is now in this city, sent out as an agent to establish auxiliary societies, obtain subscriptions to the *Missionary Register*, and in every proper way to endeavour to recruit the funds of the United Foreign Missionary Society. He is to go hence to the South and West; and we do earnestly recommend him and his errand to the Christian attention and regard of all our readers. We know that solicitations for charitable objects are numerous. But we do not know an individual, nor believe there is one, who is the poorer for all he has given. The object here recommended is a *great object*;—and while it is one to which all denominations of Christians ought to be cordially favourable, it is one which all Presbyterians ought to remember is their own."

Mission to the East.

Mr. Garret, one of the American Missionaries to India, in a letter published in the *Boston Recorder* of March 8th, says:—"The Lord sees fit to lay upon us his chastening rod, and still to withhold the influences of the spirit from the poor pagans, among whom we are placed. What the cause is of a *want of success* attending missionary exertion in this region is an interesting inquiry," &c.—We think it is, and the inference almost necessarily to be drawn on an inquiry, would be that the Lord had not sent them.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, after an expense of between one and two hundred thousand dollars on their mission in India, have only brought 16 or 17 to assume the Christian name.

A Protestant Missionary Society has been formed at Paris for the support of Missionaries abroad. COUNT VER HUELL, *Vice Admiral, Peer of France*, is President of the Society—so says the *Boston Recorder*. How unlike the early days of Christianity is the Christianity of the present time, and what a different class of men are undertaking to promote it.

[From the Harrisburg Commonwealth.]

A writer in the Washington Republican recommends the sending of all the convicts of the United States to Columbia River—thereby making a kind of Botany Bay of it. In his reasoning to enforce the policy of the measure, he says, that "they will be the progenitors of a future generation, who will be the instruments to disseminate Christianity, civilization, and our representative government throughout an extensive wild region." [Send Convicts to spread the light of Christianity, and republicanism!—Curious missoinaries these!]

The donations to benevolent societies in our country the last year, were between two and three hundred thousand dollars. Of this sum 59,000 dollars were received by the American Board for Foreign Missions; and 17,000 dollars by the American Education Society. [Boston Recorder.]

"I know a prayer meeting," says a writer in the Christian Repository, "established under the most flattering prospects; those who conducted it at the commencement, were intimate, and harmonized together—But alas! they are now cool and indifferent; and though shameful to tell, not two upon speaking terms" The Editor of the Repository very justly observes: "To all such we would say, cease to mock God."

It is stated, that the Clergy at Rome consist of 19 cardinals, 27 bishops, 1,460 priests, 1,532 monks, 1,464 nuns, and 132 Seminarists.

The following is given as the opinion expressed by Bonaparte with respect to Alexander, in Las Cases's Journal:

"The Emperor of Russia is a man superior to either the Emperor of Austria or the King of Prussia—possesses wit, grace, information, is fascinating, but he is not to be trusted; he is devoid of candour, he is cunning, false and expert; he can go a great length."

A late paper states, that one of the most distinguished poets of Italy, Pellico, has been sentenced to fifteen years imprisonment in the fortress of Spitsberg, by the Austrian government, for the crime of being a Carbonari.

A writer in one of our city papers, in his zeal for Meeting-house steeples, among other notable sayings, observes:—"And moreover, it is a public concern.—The interest of the whole community is in some measure interested; therefore I would be willing to propose a Steeple Tax, the proceeds of which should be applied to the purpose of assisting congregations in making this useful addition to their places of worship." The United States Gazette, in noticing this sage but premature device, remarks: "Among the vagaries of the present speculative era, we find a proposition from a correspondent in a morning print, to raise a tax for building steeples in this city!!!" Were the present order of priesthood in this country once to obtain the power of making laws, it is impossible to divine what kind of taxes would be levied upon us.

As "Plain Truth" has an extensive circulation in Wilmington, the Christian Repository is referred to the first number of vol. 2nd of that work for further satisfaction with respect to the statement concerning Mr. Goodell.

* * Several communications, intended for this number, are necessarily delayed for want of room.

* * WM. and JOSEPH MAROT, back of 93 Market-street, have accepted the Agency of this work. Any letters or remittances, however, sent to the former Agent and Printer, will be punctually attended to; and when more convenient, subscribers may enter their names there, pay their subscriptions, and receive the numbers. Communications and letters, in order to receive more immediate attention, may be directed to T. R. GATES, Proprietor and principal Editor, No. 299, North Third-street.

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